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Esq., of Skibbereen, to whom Dr. Allman is indebted for the opportunity of thus laying them before the Academy.

The Rev. Dr. Todd read an original and hitherto unpublished letter, relating to Wood's coinage, by Dr. William King, Archbishop of Dublin. The letter is an autograph, and is preserved in the Library of Trinity College, Dublin. It has, unfortunately, received some injury, by which the first line of each page has been lost. The date is missing, except the word *July*, which is still legible. But as the letter is addressed to Edward Hopkins, Esq., the Private Secretary of the Duke of Grafton, and as it was evidently written before Wood's name became known as the patentee of the new coinage, we must assign it to the year 1722; for the Duke of Grafton came over as Lord Lieutenant in August, 1721, and Wood's patent was issued in the beginning of 1723.

The letter is as follows :

“ *July*

“ SIR,—I gave his Grace my L^t the trouble of a letter of the tenth instance relating to a report we have here of a patent for coining brass money for this Kingdom; the first notice I had of it was from the public prints and wⁿ I went abroad found it in every body's mouth, with great indications of surprise & dissatisfaction. Since y^t time I have had occasion to discourse the most considerable, y^e most knowing and best affected to his Majesties government in this city about it, most of w^m seem perswaded y^t a thing of this consequence & which as it is rep^sented is in their opinion monstrous, for so they express themselves, cannot be attempted at all. I gathered up their sense as well as [I] cou'd and think my self obliged to communicate it to you, y^t if you think fit you may lay it before his Grace the L^d L^t.

“ 1st. therefore they say, that this is an after game of the enemies of the Kingdom, who endeavoured to put on us paper

instead of silver by a Bank, & failing to cheat us y^t way, they now wou'd impose brass on us which in the event will be equally pernicious and rather more, for there was some colour of a security for exchanging those bank bills for money, but there can be none for this; there was a possibility of preventing counterfeting in y^t case, but there can be none here.

2^{dly}. They allege y^t there is no need of brass money for change, since we still have enuf for that purpose, & to have more is so much loss to y^e kingdom.

“3^{dly}. They suspect this coinage will be granted to some favourite who will set it out to underlings and they will not fail to make the best of it, and regard only their own profit, without any consideration to w^t the kingdom may by it patent granted formerly, if I remembr right to the Earl of Arran to coin 20^m pounds in half pence & a clause in it, y^t none shoud be obliged to take above a certain sum in y^m. This was immediately sold to some who made their fortune by it, they were obliged to change these half pence wⁿ required, but easily evaded the obligation, and 'twas thus. The stamps used in coining I think are called dice, and these soon wear out and new ones are substituted in their room; they contrived to have the 2^d sett somew^t different from the first, & yⁿ, after awhile, wⁿ required to change any sum they only allowed those of the first stamp to be genuine, and alleged all the rest to be counterfeit, and who could prove the contrary; but suppose the patent obliged the grantee to change all, w^t way is there to come at him, the lousers are at a loss how to do it, or in whose name the suit must be brought, and it is manifest it were better for any private man to lose an 100^{lb} yⁿ enter into such a law suit.

“4^{thly}. Tis observed y^t the Patentees did not confine y^mselves to any sum, tho' their patent obliged y^m, but coined on till the collectors of the Kings revenue were forced to send up their money in barrels of half pence, and there was hardly a tinker or blacksmith but coined as fast as these and the

kingdom is still well stored with these w^{ch} pass under the name of Raps; now such counterfeters being become much more dexterous and more intent on their private gain yⁿ they were yⁿ, if a new Coinage be permitted it will be impossible to prevent over whelming us with such false half pieces, especially if we consider the artifices and intentness on gain of some of our neighbours, nations, who in all probability will of any coin.

“ 5^{thly}. It is not easy to counterfeit old coin; for tho they can give the same stamp, yet they can hardly give the old look, hence it is y^t every new coinage gives great opportunity to counterfitting, as we experienced in the time of King William, when all the specieses were new; a swarm of false coiners then arose, and great numbers were hanged, whereas now the practice is much abated; we must therefore expect, y^t on coining new brass pieces every town will have them set up for y^t mysterie. I know not w^t may be the penalty by law of counterfeiting such coin, but I doubt much, w^ever the penaltie be, whether juries will be prevailed on to find the forger guilty, perhaps they will believe y^t the poor man had as good a right and as great a necessity on him to cheat y^e publick as the patentee.

“ 6^{thly}. Mony of this sort will soon be at a great discount, as it happened to the brass money in King James time; and yⁿ if a landlord be p^d any considerable sum in it, he will be obliged to pay considerably to get it turned into silver, his receiver will be sure to buy as many half pence as he can and keep the gold and silver to himself, and pay his master with brass, the gain will be his, and the loss his masters, and this will be hardest on landlords who live remote from their estates, especially such as live in England.

“ 7^{thly}. All matters relating to coin, such as raising or lowering it, determining w^t species shall pass, & at w^t rate, has ever bin done by the L^d L^t & Council here, as may be seen by the many proclamations to y^t purpose, w^{re}by it appears y^t our

Kings and Queens have always on such occasions thought fit to consult y^m. If this do not take y^e same course it will be looked on as a slight by my L^d L^t, lessen him greatly in the opinin of the people, and cause a disaffection in many best affected now, to find themselves slighted.

“ 8^{thly}. It is reasonable and must be expected y^t people will pay their debts in such coin as they are obliged to receive theirs; in if therefore the people of Ireland receive their rents and revenues in brass, their creditors must expect no other; now we commonly send about 400^m pounds into England every year in pensions, salarys, rents, &c. Suppose yⁿ a tenant pays a landlord rent here in brass, w^t shall the receiver do with it? to be sure no Banker will change it for him, and yⁿ must not he send it in specie barrellled up by long sea, and can he expect it otherwise? the case will be the same in pensions and all other appointments if its there may in the patent, y^t none shall be obliged to receive above a certain quantity in brass; it ought to be considered y^t most of his Majestie’s revenu is paid in small sums, most of the fees in offices and most of the rents from terreten^{ts}, and wⁿ these come to the hands of Collectors and receivers they must take y^m, and wⁿ put together they will make great sums, and yⁿ can the persons for w^m they are rec^d refuse y^m? I remember wⁿ the half pennys were coined here before the Revolution, many firkins of them were sent to y^e treasury by the Collectors and great complaints were made of it, and it put a great damp on all business & trade.

“ 9^{thly}. ’Tis certain the Protestants of Ireland were most zealously attached to his Majestie & government, I believe you are sinsibly [*sic*] how much they are soured of late by the treatment with w^{ch} they have met. I am afraid this patent if it pass, as it will compleat their ruin, for so they reckon, so it may put an end to their good affections, & in as much as it is supposed y^t this patent is granted to gratify some private persons, sure it ought to be considered whether it be

good policy to sacrifice a whole kingdom to their particular profit.

“A great many other things are said w^h are not fit for me to write, I only mention w^t I find universally insisted on. I do not expect to do myself any service by freedom, I wish it may serve his Majestie’s interest and the public, as it is I am sure intended, w^ever happen to

“S^r

“Your

“*Edward Hopkins Esq.*”

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FEBRUARY 14TH, 1848.

REV. HUMPHREY LLOYD, D. D., PRESIDENT,
in the Chair.

THE Very Rev. J. J. Taylor, D. D.; Rev. Matthew Newport, D. D.; Frederick V. Clarendon, Charles Ottley, O’Neale Segrave, Matthew E. Talbot, and Charles Tarrant, Esqrs., were elected members of the Academy.

The Rev. Charles Graves read a paper on a general method of deciphering secret alphabetic writings.

Mr. Graves commenced by stating that he had been led to discuss the general question of deciphering, in consequence of his having undertaken, some time ago, an examination of the singular inscriptions in the Ogham character which are to be found in this country. Irish scholars and antiquaries, to whose opinions great deference is due, having pronounced that no satisfactory readings of these inscriptions had been obtained by means of the key given in the Book of Ballymote and other Irish manuscripts professing to treat of the Ogham character, Mr. Graves abandoned the attempt to draw from these sources the means of deciphering it, and applied himself to the task of constructing a key from the monuments them-